

# U.S. DOT Volpe Center

## Public Lands Team



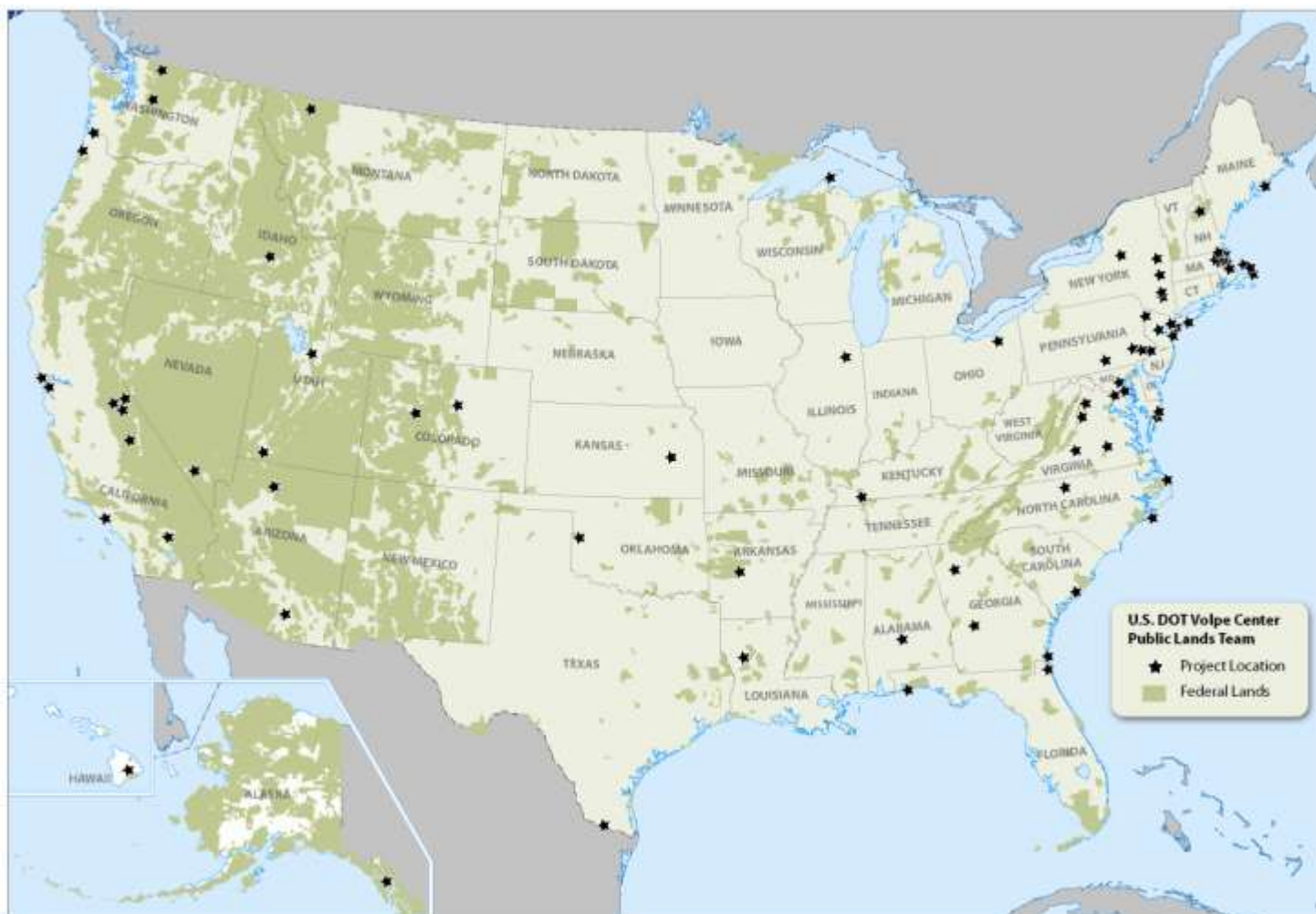
Our **Public Lands Team** includes engineers, planners, economists, policy analysts, and technical experts who work to support our sponsors in their efforts to help federal land management agencies (FLMAs) resolve complex transportation challenges. Team members represent many different organizational components of the Volpe Center and have expertise in a variety of subjects, including environmental policy and regulation, multimodal transportation systems, alternative fuels and vehicles, and climate change adaptation.

As part of the federal family, the Volpe Center is able to work closely on evolving federal policies and programs, best practices and lessons learned across agencies, and research and analysis that supports multimodal and advanced technology strategies.

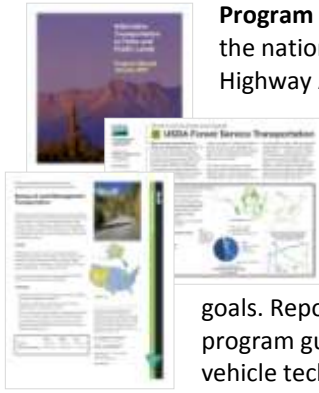
The Volpe Center's work to address the transportation system needs and priorities of FLMAs is supported in part by a Memorandum of Understanding currently in place between DOT and the Department of the Interior (DOI).

The Volpe Center has over 10 years of experience with FLMAs, beginning with a single National Park Service project at Independence National Historical Park in Philadelphia. Since then, we have conducted projects in nearly 100 locations (see map). In addition to project-specific transportation planning and analysis, we also work with FLMA national offices on agency-wide program development and evaluation. *(Examples of our work appear on the reverse.)*

FLMAs manage approximately 35% of America's lands, to protect natural and cultural resources of national significance and to provide the American public with unparalleled recreational and educational opportunities. Federal lands are experiencing great changes: increasing visitation, changing demographics, shifting visitor uses, and the encroachment of suburban development. They are also facing a number of challenges, such as limited funding, even as past underinvestment must be overcome. However, federal lands also sit at the confluence of many national policy initiatives, including livability and sustainability, health, environmental education, clean energy, and planning for climate change.



## Volpe Center Public Lands Team – Project Examples



**Program development and evaluation** – At the national level, we work with the Federal Highway Administration, the Federal Transit Administration, and FLMAs to develop programs, support plans, identify priorities, and characterize transportation needs on federal lands, in line with DOT’s livability and sustainability goals. Reports developed include fact sheets, program guidance, and research on alternative vehicle technologies.

**Transportation assistance group (TAG) reviews** – The Volpe Center has led and participated in many TAGs: site visits by an interagency team of transportation professionals to deliver



technical assistance, scope projects, and provide guidance to FLMA field staff. In 2007, our TAG team (RITA, FTA, and FHWA) received the DOT Secretary’s Award for Partnering for Excellence “...for innovative interagency assistance to

FLMAs in determining transportation strategies for improving visitor mobility at national parks and public lands.” TAGs have been conducted in such varied places as Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest and Mt. Rainier National Park, in Washington State, Wichita Mountains National Wildlife Refuge, in Oklahoma, and Hot Springs National Park, in Arkansas.

**Multi-faceted alternative transportation planning** – One example of this work is at Sabino Canyon. Part of the Coronado National Forest, located outside Tucson, Arizona, Sabino Canyon is experiencing many transportation challenges, including an aging fleet of diesel shuttles, limited parking, and vehicle, bicycle, and pedestrian conflicts along a narrow mountain road. This is occurring in a place that is vulnerable to flash floods, home to endangered species, and contains nine historical bridge structures. The Volpe Center study included several stakeholder meetings and developed over 80 solutions and five alternative strategies for the future of transportation at Sabino Canyon.



**Multi-agency transportation assistance for long-term plans** – Volpe Center work is often based on longer-range planning efforts, as in this example. Assateague Island serves as a popular destination for recreation and wildlife observation, attracting over two million visitors annually. The island plays an important rural economic development role for Virginia and Maryland’s Eastern Shore, especially the Town of Chincoteague, through which visitors to Virginia must pass to access the public lands. The Volpe Center conducted alternative transportation studies that will inform comprehensive plans for the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge and Assateague Island National Seashore. The studies focused on improving access options and assessing the impacts of an increasingly dynamic land base on future transportation infrastructure and access.



**Stakeholder involvement and partnerships** – The Volpe Center has a longstanding relationship with the Cape Cod National Seashore (“CACO”) and other key organizations on Cape Cod, including the Cape Cod Commission (CCC) and the Regional Transit Authority (RTA). This partnership began in 2000, with the *CACO Shuttle Bus System and Electric Tram Study*, and was followed by completion of several other plans and studies. All of these projects included significant outreach to local government agencies. More recent projects have included a shared-use maintenance facility feasibility study, an integrated ITS plan, a beach parking shuttle study to prepare for future erosion of existing facilities, an alternative transportation study for Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge, and a successful transit marketing initiative, undertaken with many different public-sector and private-sector partners.

**Alternative fuel and vehicle analysis** – The Volpe Center provides technical assistance in the evaluation and selection of alternative fuel vehicles. One such study provided a vehicle decision document to North Cascades National Park. The recommended vehicles were purchased and placed into successful operation, meeting the requirements of park managers and staff, transit operating staff, and park visitors.



For more information, visit [www.volpe.dot.gov/publiclands](http://www.volpe.dot.gov/publiclands) or contact:

**Eric J. Plosky**

Public Lands Team Leader and Chief,  
Transportation Planning Division  
[Eric.Plosky@dot.gov](mailto:Eric.Plosky@dot.gov), 617-494-2785

**Dr. Rachel H. Winkeller**

Director, Center of Innovation for Policy,  
Planning, and Organizational Analysis  
[Rachel.Winkeller@dot.gov](mailto:Rachel.Winkeller@dot.gov), 617-494-2764

**Gary T. Ritter**

Director, Center of Innovation for  
Advanced Transportation Technologies  
[Gary.Ritter@dot.gov](mailto:Gary.Ritter@dot.gov), 617-494-2716